

Background

The SNC held its first annual symposium on December 5, 2007, focused on Climate Change and the Sierra Nevada. The event was attended by more than 300 individuals representing a wide range of perspectives and organizations. Speakers and panelists presented information addressing issues specific to the potential effects of climate change on the Sierra Nevada, how the Region may contribute positively to reducing the impacts and how communities and individuals can adapt.

Symposium participants raised the idea of developing a program for Climate Change in the Sierra. At the March Board meeting, the SNC Board directed staff to continue working on this idea.

Current Status

As reported in March, the SNC joined with the Resources Agency, the California Tahoe Conservancy and the US Forest Service in securing the services of Steve Eubanks (former Forest Supervisor on the Tahoe National Forest) to identify an approach for creation of a Sierra Nevada Climate Change Action Plan. Mr. Eubanks has been working with that team as well as other state and federal agencies and key stakeholders to identify opportunities and alternatives for such an effort.

Additional tasks completed to date:

- Created and launched a survey, initially distributed to almost 950 groups, agencies and individuals including invitees/registrants from last year's Symposium, California Resources Agency climate change group members, key stakeholders from both the Sierra Nevada and California Tahoe Conservancies, federal land managers, Fire Safe Councils, Resource Conservation Districts, and others – to solicit input on the kinds of services that would be useful to groups active in the Sierra and how such organizations might use and support a climate action-related program.
- Personal contact with “umbrella” organizations representing key stakeholder groups, including the Sierra Business Council, Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council, Regional Council of Rural Counties, federal land managers, the California Rangeland Trust, Forest Service research community, Sierra Nevada Alliance, The Sierra Fund, and others. Meetings are being scheduled with the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association, additional Sierra Business Council business members and the PG&E Stewardship Council.
- Staff is still in the process of developing modifications to the Strategic Plan to more accurately reflect the SNC's goals and objectives relating to climate change.

Next Steps

Using input received from the outreach efforts described above, the committee and consultant will develop a concept paper describing alternative approaches to creating a climate change program, including potential roles and services, existing climate change efforts to coordinate with, potential partners, governance structures, and funding sources to support the effort. More specific information and proposals will be brought back to the SNC Board for consideration in October.

Recommendation

No action is needed from the Board at this time. Staff welcomes any suggestions or recommendations from the Board relative to our ongoing activities described above.